

Message Text

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INFO RUTALS/AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE 8484

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AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ACCRA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

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FOLLOWING REPEAT HAVANA 0666 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO ADDIS ABABA
MOGADISCIO MOSCOW MAR 14.

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L HAVANA 0666

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV PBOR MILI ET SO CU

SUBJ: CUBANS LINK "NO BORDER CROSSING" PLEDGE IN ETHIOPIA
TO SOMALI GUARANTEE OF ETHIOPIAN SECURITY

1. GRANMA, MARCH 14, PRINTS HIGHLY AUTHORITATIVE DESCRIPTION OF ETHIOPIAN WAR, COMPLETE WITH SEVEN COMBAT MAPS (WITH PLACE NAMES MARKED IN RUSSIAN) AND PHOTOS. GRANMA, STATING THAT ITS ACCOUNT IS "APPROPRIATELY AUTHORIZED", REPORTS THAT "VIRTUALLY ONE HUNDRED PERCENT OF OCCUPIED ETHIOPIAN TERRITORY" HAS BEEN LIBERATED. GRANMA ALSO STATES THAT ETHIOPIA HAS "OFFERED GUARANTEES" THAT IT WILL NOT CROSS SOMALI FRONTIER. BUT CUBANS ADD, "THE PRESUMES (RECEIPT OF) APPROPRIATE GUARANTEES THAT AGGRESSIONS AGAINST THE ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION FROM SOMALI TERRITORY WILL CEASE DEFINITELY." GRANMA ADDS THAT US DID NOT OFFER SUCH CONCESSIONS TO AGGRESSORS AFTER PEARL HARBOR. (COMMENT: THIS IS FIRST TIME THAT CUBANS HAVE PUBLICLY MADE "NO BORDER CROSSING" PLEDGE CONDITIONAL ON OTHER DEVELOPMENTS (I.E., THE CALLED FOR SOMALI GUARANTEES.) SENIOR CUBAN OFFICIALS HAVE TOLD US PRIVATELY, HOWEVER, THAT IF SIAD WERE TO CONTINUE TO THREATEN ETHIOPIA, AFTER HIS FORCES ARE REMOVED FROM OGADEN, THERE WOULD BE A "NEW STORY" IN WHICH POSSIBILITY FOR CUBAN "POSITIVE GESTURES" - SUCH AS TROOP DRAWDOWNS - WOULD BE ELIMINATED AND OTHER NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES COULD FOLLOW. WE ALSO UNDERSTAND, ALBEIT SECOND-HAND, THAT CUBAN-ETHIOPIAN PLANNING, PERHAPS ON CONTINGENCY BASIS, TOOK PLACE IN PAST FOR OCCUPATION OF HARGEISA AND BERBERA.)

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2. GRANMA CONTINUES WITH WHAT APPEARS TO BE UNABASHED APPEAL FOR SIAD'S OVERTHROW BY PRAISING BRAVERY OF SOMALI SOLDIERS AND POINTING OUT THAT IT IS "CRIMINAL" THAT SOMALI LEADERS TOOK SOLDIERS INTO ABSURD WAR. GRANMA CONCLUDES THAT "THE CHAUVINIST, EXPANSIONIST, AGGRESSIVE, ADVENTURIST, WARLIKE FACTION OF THE SOMALI GOVERNMENT, WHICH ALLYING ITSELF WITH ARAB REACTION AND IMPERIALISM, BROUGHT ABOUT THIS CRIMINAL, DIRTY, OPPORTUNIST WAR AGAINST ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION, HAS BEEN DEFEATED." GRANMA SAYS THAT "IMPERIALISM" NOW OFFERS "CASTLES AND VILLAS" (PRESUMABLY A REFERENCE TO ECONOMIC AID) TO ITS SOMALI "REACTIONARY ACCOMPLICES" BUT THE (SOMALI) PEOPLE CANNOT BE DECEIVED FOR LONG."

3. GRANMA DESCRIBES SOMALI CEASEFIRE OFFER AS DECEPTION, SINCE SOMALIS HAVE NOTHING LEFT TO WITHDRAW FROM OGADEN. GRANMA STATES THAT BULK OF SOMALI TANKS AND ARTILLERY HAS BEEN LOST AND THAT FLIGHT OF REST OF SOMALI REGULAR FORCES TO AVOID SURRENDER OR ENCIRCLEMENT IS NOT A VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL. GRANMA ADDS THAT "DEFEAT CANNOT BE CONVERTED INTO INSTRUMENT OF NEGOTIATION."

4. GRANMA ALSO ADMITS FOR FIRST TIME THAT CUBAN TROOPS

HAVE BEEN PARTICIPATING DIRECTLY IN ETHIOPIAN COMBAT.
GRANMA STATES THAT CUBAN COMBAT ELEMENTS ARRIVED IN DECEMBER
AND JANUARY AND ENTERED BATTLE ON JANUARY 22. CUBAN COMBA-
TANTS, "FIGHTING TOGETHER" WITH ETHIOPIAN FORCES, ARE
DESCRIBED AS TANK OPERATORS, PILOTS, AND ARTILLERY PERSONNEL,
AND, IN FINAL PHASE OF ASSAULT, AS "BATALLIONS OF ARMORED
INFANTRY".

5. SEPTTEL FOLLOW WITH ADDITIONAL DETAILS.

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